

Uneven Global Peace: How and Why Tranquillity Varies Across Regions, Religions, and Economies

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Abstract

This study analyses global peace trends from 2008 to 2024 and explores how peace varies across regions, religious demographics, economic conditions, and geographical characteristics in 2024. Using descriptive statistics—mean, standard deviation, trend analysis, and Pearson correlation—based on Global Peace Index data, it evaluates cross-country patterns in peacefulness. The findings show that most countries have largely maintained their relative peace status over time, with only a few experiencing significant deterioration or improvement. Although economic prosperity is positively associated with peace, political factors emerge as more decisive. Political stability is the most influential determinant, followed by governance quality and the extent of external intervention. While Islamic-majority countries record lower average peace scores than Christian-majority and secular nations, the analysis finds no evidence that religion itself determines peace outcomes. Instead, institutional strength, political context, and regional dynamics explain much of the variation. Geographical positioning also matters: countries near conflict-prone regions and landlocked states tend to be less peaceful, whereas island nations generally display higher peace levels. Overall, the study highlights the need to strengthen governance, ensure political stability, promote regional cooperation, and reduce external intervention to achieve sustainable global peace.

Keywords: global peace, political stability, geographical positioning, religion

1. Introduction

Global peace has never been evenly distributed across the world. It varies across regions, countries with different religious affiliations, and levels of economic development. Certain parts of West Asia, including Syria, Israel, Yemen, and Lebanon, have remained persistently unsafe and among the least peaceful regions for a prolonged period due to ongoing geopolitical conflicts. Multiple factors have contributed to this uneven global peace pattern. Ghazalian and Hammoud (2020) identified several economic and socio-economic factors that exhibit considerable peace variations across the world. It is generally conceived that peace variation goes against Islam-majority countries while some area West Asia remained largely and widely less safe and less peaceful due to several reasons. The Global Peace Index 2024, published by

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Published: 05 March 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70558/IJSSR.2026.v3.i2.30888>

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the Institute for Economics and Peace, provides a clear picture of peace variations, trends, and patterns across countries worldwide.

The present study seeks to analyse trends in global peace and to examine how and why peace varies across geographical regions, countries with diverse religious demographics, and differing levels of economic prosperity.

2. Literature Review

It is widely acknowledged that global peace is closely associated with economic prosperity. Yacoubian et al. (2025) argue that higher levels of peacefulness are generally linked to higher levels of income, and vice versa. However, attributing variations in global peace solely to economic factors would be inadequate, as multiple determinants shape the peace status of countries and regions. Broadly, both economic and political factors influence the level of peace within a country. McConaghy (2012) similarly emphasizes the complex relationship between peace and a range of interrelated factors, each exerting varying degrees of impact and intensity. Several studies on global peace have already confirmed this complex relation between global peace and economic or non-economic factors (eg: Das and DiRienzo, 2012; Remo et al., 2016).

Several studies also connect global peace with societal values. For instance, Fischer and Hanke (2009) examine the relationship between peace and societal values such as harmony, hierarchy, and intellectual autonomy, while also considering GDP per capita as a potential driver of peace. Taking the analysis a step further, Destek et al. (2022) investigate renewable energy as a possible determinant of global peace. Their findings suggest that renewable energy consumption, along with economic growth, plays a significant role in combating terrorism in the selected countries.

3. Methodology

This paper adopts a predominantly descriptive and exploratory approach to examine recent trends and patterns in global peace, its underlying causes, and the key attributive factors associated with variations in peacefulness across nations. The primary dataset is drawn from the Global Peace Index (GPI) (2008–2024), published annually by the Institute for Economics and Peace. The GPI provides a composite measure of peacefulness based on indicators related to ongoing conflict, societal safety and security, and militarisation (Institute for Economics and Peace, various years).

To explore the economic correlates of peace, the study incorporates GDP per capita (current US\$) and the Human Development Index (HDI). GDP per capita data are sourced from the World Bank, while HDI data are obtained from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These indicators are used to examine the association between material prosperity, human development, and national peace scores in 2024, in line with existing literature.

Political and institutional dimensions are also analysed. Variables such as political stability, level of democracy, governance quality, freedom of expression, external intervention, and terrorism are incorporated to understand their relationship with peace scores. Indicators

related to democracy are informed by datasets such as those of Freedom House and Varieties of Democracy Institute, while measures of political stability and governance are drawn from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. The study also considers the level of happiness using data from the World Happiness Report to assess whether subjective well-being correlates with higher levels of peacefulness.

Further, the paper undertakes a comparative regional analysis to identify spatial patterns of peace across continents. It also examines variations in peace scores across countries grouped by majority religious affiliation, attempting to interpret observed differences through socio-political, historical, and geopolitical contexts rather than attributing causality to religion per se.

To better understand cross-national variation in peace scores, additional structural and geographic variables are considered, including refugee population (sourced from UNHCR), proximity to conflict-prone or peace-vulnerable states, and locational advantages such as insularity or distance from major conflict zones. These factors are analysed descriptively to assess whether exposure to regional instability, forced migration pressures, or geographic isolation influences national peacefulness.

Overall, by combining longitudinal GPI data with selected economic, political, demographic, geographic, and socio-cultural indicators, this study seeks to provide a multidimensional understanding of global peace dynamics and the structural conditions associated with higher or lower levels of peacefulness in 2024.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Trends in Global Peace Categories (2008–2024)

The analysis of global peace trends from 2008 to 2024 reveals diverse patterns in the peace status of countries. Among the 138 countries studied, 39 have been consistently categorized as the most peaceful, with peace scores below 1.8, reflecting strong institutional stability and effective governance mechanisms. A slightly larger group of 44 nations falls under the fairly peaceful category (peace scores between 1.8 and 2.2), indicating relatively stable conditions with occasional disruptions. Meanwhile, 21 countries are classified as moderately peaceful (scores between 2.2 and 2.6), often due to ongoing structural challenges.

Alarming, 8 nations are consistently listed as the least peaceful (scores 2.7 and above), highlighting chronic instability or persistent conflicts. Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Israel, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, and Sudan belong to this category (see Appendix 1). Political instability, external intervention, internal conflict, and weak democracy have contributed to the lowest peace status in these countries, with the exception of Russia, where peace worsened due to authoritarianism and the repression of opposition, and Israel, where longstanding tensions with Palestine and constant external pressure from the Arab world have played a significant role (see Table 1 for correlation coefficients between these variables and peace scores).

The overwhelming prevalence of a secular trend in peace categories implies both positive and negative insights. While 83 countries fall under the most or fairly peaceful categories, indicating a significant portion of the world experiences consistent political stability, the persistence of 8 least peaceful countries and 21 moderately peaceful nations

suggests a vicious cycle of instability or systemic challenges in these regions. This situation underscores the urgent need for proactive measures, both endogenous (within these countries) and exogenous (through international cooperation or support).

Dynamic trends reveal that 20 countries have experienced deteriorating peace, as their scores have risen in recent years, while only 5 have shown improvements with declining peace scores. Additionally, one country (Chad) exhibits fluctuating peace, lacking a clear trend.

These findings highlight the importance of targeted interventions to address both persistent and emerging challenges to global peace. Effective conflict resolution, capacity building, and addressing underlying socio-economic disparities should form the core of such efforts to promote a sustainable and peaceful global environment.

Table 1: Countries under different peace categories from 2008 to 2024

Consistentl y least peaceful	Consistentl y most peaceful	Consistentl y fairly peaceful	Consistentl y moderately peaceful	Deterioratin g peace	Improvin g peace	Fluctuatin g peace
8	39	44	21	20	5	1

Source: Author’s estimates based on Global Peace Index, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

Respective peace score range: Consistently least peaceful 2.7 and above; Consistently most peaceful below 1.8; Consistently fairly peaceful 1.8-2.2; Consistently moderately peaceful 2.2-2.6; Deteriorating peace: Peace score rises in the recent period; Improving peace: Peace score falls in the recent period; Fluctuating peace: No secular trend

4.2. Political and Economic Determinants of Peace

Globally, peace is strongly linked to political and institutional quality. Political stability (-0.88) and governance (-0.71) show the highest negative correlations with lack of peace, implying that better governance and stable politics enhance peace. Democracy (-0.62) and HDI (-0.59) also support peace, while external intervention (0.68) and terrorism (0.57) severely erode it. In short, countries that combine stability, democracy, and good governance with limited external interference tend to remain peaceful (see Table 2). It is not surprising that freedom of speech and express does not exhibit stronger impact on peace scores as Das and DiRienzo (2012) identified a complex pattern. They found that highly repressed societies may have a controlled peace maintained by strict authority. Highly free societies, on the other hand, experience peace based on fundamental rights such as freedom of expression. However, when political and civil freedoms are only moderate, they may not be strong enough to address public grievances, which can result in more conflict, higher crime, and lower levels of peace. Global peace is driven both by internal as well as external factors (Remo et al., 2016).

Table 2: Correlation between world peace and political/economic indicators, 2024

HD I	Per capita GDP	Political stability	Level of democracy	External intervention	Governance	Terrorism	Freedom speech	Happiness
-.59	-.53	-.88	-.62	.68	-.71	.57	-.41	-.52

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024) and databases of World Bank (2024a; 2024b)

Note: A low peace score indicates a high peace level, and vice versa. A negative value implies a positive correlation between peace and the concerned variable.

4.3. Peace Variation by Region

The data presented in table 3 indicates how peace level varies by continents. While Europe and Oceania remain the most peaceful regions of the world, with average peace scores of 1.68 and 1.61 respectively, Asia and Africa are the least peaceful on average, with scores of 2.20 and 2.18 respectively. The Americas are also less peaceful compared to Europe and Oceania, with North America scoring 2.03 and South America 2.10. These descriptive findings are supported by statistically significant post-hoc results from a one-way ANOVA, confirming significant differences between the peace scores of Asia and Africa compared to those of Europe and Oceania.

Europe and Oceania not only remain the most peaceful regions but also exhibit relatively lower standard deviations, indicating consistency in their peace levels. Both regions of the Americas experience moderate peace challenges, with their scores positioned between the lower values of Europe and Oceania and the higher values of Asia and Africa, but tending more toward the less peaceful side. Despite Oceania’s lower average score, its countries are not consistently the most peaceful, as indicated by a relatively higher standard deviation of 0.454. Africa, on the other hand, remains consistently the least peaceful region, as shown by its lower standard deviation of 0.317. Europe and the Americas show moderate consistency, with Europe tending toward higher peace levels and the Americas toward lower ones. Among the 41 Asian countries, the majority are relatively less peaceful, showing higher lack-of-peace scores, with notable exceptions such as Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Qatar, and Bhutan, whose scores remain below 1.6. The presence of some of the world’s least peaceful countries—such as Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Israel—with scores of 2.8 or above further raises the regional average of Asia.

Table 3: Region-wise Descriptives

Region	Frequency	Mean of Peace Score	SD
Asia	41	2.2	0.501
Africa	35	2.18	0.317

Europe	36	1.68	0.377
Oceania	3	1.61	0.454
South America	11	2.1	0.324
North America	12	2.03	0.329

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

4.4. Peace Variation by Religious Affiliation of Countries

Countries with mixed religious communities or a strong secular character tend to be the most peaceful, as reflected by their lowest mean peace score of 1.73 (see Table 4). Christian-majority countries also remain relatively peaceful, with a mean score of 1.93. In contrast, Islamic countries appear more vulnerable to peace disruptions, showing a higher mean score of 2.29. However, the high standard deviation (0.497) indicates wide variation within this group — including some of the most peaceful nations such as Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman, all scoring below 1.7. At the same time, the group also contains some of the world’s least peaceful countries — Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan — each with scores exceeding 2.9. Among Christian countries, most are highly or moderately peaceful, with notable exceptions like Zimbabwe, Russia, and Ukraine.

Several countries continue to experience peace disruptions due to a range of economic and political factors. Religion arguably plays a role in shaping global peace patterns, as countries with a predominant Islamic affiliation tend to exhibit lower peace on average. Nations with mixed religious communities or strong secular orientations are among the most peaceful, with a mean peace score of 1.73. Christian-majority countries also show relative stability, recording an average peace score of 1.93. In contrast, Islamic countries have a higher average score of 2.29, indicating greater vulnerability to peace disruptions. However, the high standard deviation (0.497) reveals considerable variation within this group—ranging from highly peaceful nations like Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman (scores below 1.7) to conflict-ridden states such as Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan (scores above 2.9).

Does religion itself play a role in this disparity? This question gains relevance in light of the prevailing belief—right or wrong—that Islam spread across the world through invasions and conquests (Lapidus, 2014). However, the fact remains that all religions fundamentally call for holistic peace, which is not limited to the spiritual realm but also encompasses physical and social well-being (Malik & Kayadibi, 2011). Nevertheless, the parenthood of global terrorism is seemingly being deliberately attributed to Islam. In this context, an attempt has to be made to examine whether Islam contributes to the deterioration of peace within the Islamic bloc across the world. The present analysis also seeks to explore the political and economic factors that distinguish the highly peaceful Islamic nations from the least peaceful ones, and to assess the extent to which external forces influence peace efforts in Islamic countries. Countries in the ‘Others’ category remain the least peaceful, with an average score of 2.44, primarily due to the inclusion of Israel, one of the world’s least peaceful countries.

Table 4: Peace Score Statistics by Religious Affiliation of Countries, 2024

Religion	Frequency	Mean of Peace Score	SD
Islam	35	2.29	0.497
Christianity	79	1.93	0.396
Buddhism	8	2	0.318
Mixed/Secular	13	1.73	0.338
Others (Hinduism & Jewism)	3	2.44	0.401

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

4.4.1. Reality Check of Peace Variation of Islamic Nations

The variation in peace scores among Islamic countries is particularly noteworthy, as the mean peace score of Islamic countries remains higher (2.29) than that of Christian-majority (1.93) and secular countries (1.73), indicating comparatively lower levels of peace (see Table 4). Although Islamic countries tend to be less peaceful on average compared to others, the degree of variation within this group is relatively high. This is clear from the data presented in table 5. Among the 36 major Islamic countries, 10 are highly peaceful, with scores below 2, whereas 12 are among the least peaceful, with scores above 2.6. Within this latter group, six countries—including Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan—are extremely vulnerable to peace disruptions, with scores exceeding 3. Several other countries with significant Islamic populations, such as Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, and Egypt, display moderate peace scores. It implies that it is not the religion making the countries vulnerable to peace-fragility.

Regional differences play a crucial role in shaping these outcomes. The highly peaceful Islamic countries are largely found among the GCC and Southeast Asian nations, where economic prosperity, political stability, and effective governance systems promote peace. In contrast, the least peaceful countries are primarily located in West Africa, West Asia, and South Asia, where long-standing geopolitical tensions, internal conflicts, and fragile institutions persist. Ongoing crises such as the Yemen civil war, the prolonged instability in Afghanistan, and the India–Pakistan border tensions further contribute to their lower peace scores. Moreover, widespread poverty, terrorism, weak state capacity, and external political interventions continue to exacerbate instability in these regions. Overall, many of the least peaceful Islamic countries score low on peace indexes due to shared structural and conflict-related reasons.

Table 5: Peace Statistics of Islamic Nations, 2024

Most Peaceful Islamic Nations	Peace Score	Least Peaceful Islamic Nations	Peace Score
Malaysia	1.427	Iran	2.682
Kuwait	1.622	Lebanon	2.693

Qatar	1.656	Türkiye	2.78
Oman	1.761	Pakistan	2.783
Indonesia	1.857	Nigeria	2.907
United Arab Emirates	1.897	Burkina Faso	2.969
Kazakhstan	1.954	Yemen	3.01
Uzbekistan	1.957	Iraq	3.045
Sierra Leone	1.993	Mali	3.095
Jordan	1.998	Syria	3.173
		Afghanistan	3.294
		Sudan	3.327
Mean	1.81	Mean	2.98
SD	0.191	SD	0.219

Source: Global Peace Index, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

4.4.2. Why Peace is Uneven in Islamic Countries?

Several Islamic countries — notably Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan — have remained among the least peaceful for over a decade as per Global Peace Index from 2008 to 2024 published by Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). Others such as Iran, Lebanon, Türkiye, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania, and Nigeria also record peace scores above the Islamic average of 2.29. The reasons are multifaceted: prolonged internal conflicts, political instability, external interventions, weak governance, and low democratic participation have collectively undermined political stability and social harmony.

Malaysia, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman remain among the most peaceful Islamic nations due to multiple factors. The governments of these countries are highly stable despite weaker democratic values. Strong economic performance, high levels of human development, and limited external conflicts have contributed to their safety and peacefulness. However, Qatar remains somewhat vulnerable to external interventions despite its political stability and minimal terrorist activities. The United States maintains a major military base and a significant military presence in Qatar, and reports have suggested that Israel had recently launched missile strikes allegedly targeting Hamas members in Qatar. Despite the strong presence of Islamic populations and laws influenced by Islam, these nations generally promote tolerance and global cooperation. Authoritarian nature of governments and weaker status of freedom of expression haven't affected their peace status. It should be specially noted that higher freedom of expression in Nigeria and Mali have not improved their peace level as well. It all imply weaker connection between the two.

While terrorism remains relatively low in highly peaceful countries, almost all of the least peaceful nations—such as Pakistan, Nigeria, Yemen, Syria, and Afghanistan—continue to grapple with intense terrorist activities. These Islamic countries rank among the least peaceful in the world due to high political instability, internal conflicts, and weak governance, in addition to their vulnerability to terrorism. Economically, these nations are significantly weaker, belonging to either the lower-middle-income or low-income categories as per World Bank classification, with limited opportunities for growth. The movement of people, goods, services, and capital remains severely restricted in these economies. In contrast, the highly peaceful Islamic countries discussed earlier fall under the upper-middle-income or high-income categories, with stronger and more open economies that facilitate the free movement of people and resources. It implies that the least peaceful countries continue to remain both less peaceful and economically weaker, while the highly peaceful countries persist as peaceful and economically stronger. The former have consistently ranked among the least peaceful nations over a long period, due to enduring historical issues, as reflected in the Global Peace Index reports from 2008 to 2024. Similarly, highly peaceful countries also have consistently maintained their high peace rankings over time.

Governance quality is also strongly correlated to global peace (-0.71) as per the data provided in table 2, next after political stability. Governance rankings of highly peaceful countries are significantly higher than the lower peaceful ones.

4.5. Peace Variation by Refugee Population of Origin Countries

The number of refugees by country of origin clearly indicates how unsafe or unlivable conditions have become in those countries. People are often forced to flee due to political, ethnic, religious, or even economic reasons. According to World Bank (2025) data, the refugee population by country or territory of origin is highest in Syria, affected by prolonged domestic unrest, followed by Ukraine and Afghanistan (with around 6 million each). Other major sources include South Sudan (about 2 million) and Sudan (about 1 million), out of a total of approximately 38 million refugees worldwide in 2023. People fled Syria and Sudan due to civil wars, Ukraine due to the Russian invasion and ongoing conflict, Afghanistan because of political repression and persecution, and South Sudan owing to political instability. Moreover, Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar faced religious persecution and fled to neighboring countries. A sizeable number of refugees have also left Venezuela due to severe economic distress and humanitarian crisis. It is not surprising to know that all the above mentioned countries with world's highest refugee population remains least peaceful for the past years.

Table 6 reveals a clear and systematic relationship between refugee outflows and national peace levels. As countries move from the lowest refugee-origin category (0–100 refugees) to the highest category (>1 lakh refugees), the mean peace score steadily increases from 1.58 to 2.80. Since higher scores in the Global Peace Index indicate lower levels of peacefulness, this monotonic rise suggests that countries generating larger refugee populations are significantly less peaceful. The sharp increase in the mean score for the highest refugee-origin group particularly indicates severe internal instability, conflict, or institutional breakdown in these countries. Additionally, the relatively higher standard deviations in the upper refugee categories imply greater variability in conflict intensity among these nations,

though the overall trend remains consistent. Overall, the table provides strong empirical support for the structural link between declining peace conditions and rising forced displacement.

Table 6: Peace Statistics of Countries Classified by Refugee Population (Origin Country)

Refugee Population by Origin Country	Frequency	Mean Peace Score	SD
Lowest (0-100)	26	1.58	0.256
Low (101-1000)	35	1.96	0.343
Moderate (1001-10000)	30	2.09	0.304
High (10001-100000)	27	2.24	0.383
Highest (>1 lakh)	20	2.80	0.385

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index 2024, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024); World Bank (2024a)

4.6. Peace Variation by Proximity to Vulnerable Countries

The proximity of countries to peace-fragile countries and regions is important when examining its relationship with peace scores. The table 7 reveals a clear relationship between geographical proximity to the least peaceful countries and the overall peace performance of nations. Countries located in the most peaceful regions, where neither they nor their neighboring countries share borders with the least peaceful nations, record a relatively low mean peace score of 1.94 (SD = 0.418), indicating comparatively higher peacefulness. Similarly, countries in moderately peaceful regions, where only neighboring countries share borders with the least peaceful states, show almost the same mean score (1.93, SD = 0.323), suggesting limited spillover effects when exposure is indirect. However, the situation changes significantly for countries in the least peaceful regions, where both the country itself and its neighboring country share borders with the least peaceful nations. This group records a markedly higher mean peace score of 2.46 (SD = 0.474), indicating substantially lower levels of peace. The higher standard deviation in this category also reflects greater instability and variation in peace conditions. Overall, the findings suggest that direct and compounded geographical exposure to conflict-prone countries intensifies insecurity, supporting the argument of regional spillover effects in peace and conflict dynamics, as measured in Global Peace Index 2024.

Table 7: Peace Statistics of Countries Classified by Proximity to Least Peaceful Countries (Origin Country)

Border sharing with least peaceful countries	Frequency	Mean Peace Score	SD
Most peaceful region (Not even neighboring countries share)	90	1.94	0.418

Moderately peaceful region (Only neighboring country share)	26	1.93	0.323
Least peaceful region (Both concerned country and neighboring country shares)	22	2.46	0.474

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index 2024, Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

4.7. Peace Variation by Locational Advantage

The locational characteristics of countries can make a significant difference in their peace scores. The data presented in Table 8 imply that island nations are generally more peaceful, with a lower mean lack-of-peace score of 1.78. In contrast, both partially and fully landlocked countries appear more prone to lower levels of peace, recording relatively higher scores of 2.05 and 2.04, respectively. When this finding is connected with the data presented in Table 7, it suggests that landlocked countries are generally more vulnerable to external intervention and military conflict, which may adversely affect their overall peace performance.

Table 8: Peace Statistics of Countries Classified by Proximity to Least Peaceful Countries (Origin Country)

Location	Frequency	Mean Peace Score	SD
Island nations	16	1.78	0.396
Fully landlocked nations	34	2.04	0.445
Partially landlocked nations	91	2.05	0.455

Source: Author’s estimation based on Global Peace Index 2024, , Institute for Economics and Peace (2008-2024)

5. Conclusions

A clear majority of countries in the Global Peace Index (2008–2024) have largely maintained their relative peace positions over time (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2008–2024). The largest groups are those consistently fairly peaceful (44) and consistently most peaceful (39), while only a small number fall into the least peaceful (8), deteriorating (20), improving (5), or fluctuating (1) categories.

The findings reveal that political factors play a decisive role in shaping peace outcomes. Political stability emerges as the most crucial determinant, followed by governance quality and the extent of external intervention. This is consistent with earlier empirical studies highlighting the importance of institutional quality and political order in sustaining peace (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Ghazalian & Hammoud, 2021; Remo et al., 2016; McConaghy, 2012). Regionally, Europe and Oceania remain the most peaceful continents, while other regions exhibit comparatively lower levels of peace (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2008–2024).

Although Islamic-majority countries appear, on average, less peaceful than Christian-majority and secular countries, religion alone does not explain global peace disparities. Variation within Islamic countries suggests that governance structures and political contexts are more decisive than religious identity (Fischer & Hanke, 2009; Malik & Kayadibi, 2011).

Geographical conditions also matter. Proximity to conflict-prone regions increases vulnerability to instability, while island nations tend to be more peaceful than landlocked countries (Remo et al., 2016). Overall, global peace emerges as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped primarily by political stability, governance quality, and regional dynamics rather than by religious affiliation alone (McConaghy, 2012; Ghazalian & Hammoud, 2021).

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